

JOHN-A-DREAMS.

Who sits out in the orchard bowers,
Blowing bubbles of apple-bloom?
Who washed the cheeks of the baby flow-
ers,
And swept the grass with a windy
broom?

Jack-a-Dreams, John-a-Dreams, radiant
fellow!
Busiest body from dawn till night;
Thrumming his tunes on rose and yellow,
And all the strings in the harp of light.

His are the boatings low in the valleys,
Cobweb cordage and woven keel;
He lights them over with dew, his gal-
lers,
And rides from the dock on Arachne's
wheel.

Jack-a-Dreams, John-a-Dreams, day's a-
dying!
Take up your brush and dabble the
west.
Leave us your pennon there a-flying,
Set with stars for a silver crest!
—Alice Brown, in St. Nicholas.

HE WILL COME BACK

By Edith Berkeley.

"WHEREVER he went to, he will be twenty-six this blessed day, will be Master John," said Nurse Cotter softly to herself as she stood in a shady corner of the old-fashioned garden, her eyes bent upon a thick patch of sweet violet leaves growing almost wild under the mossy wall. "Planted them himself, he did, my pretty boy, when his head was little higher than the kitchen table, and Miss Kitty helping, of course. Always together, they was, and now two years gone and no sign of him. Master has altered a good deal since the weary day he left us. But for Miss Kitty, dear lamb, there would hardly be a sound of life now in the house. Oh! Master John, Master John, do you think this day of your sweetheart, Miss Kitty, of your home and the old nurse as loves you?"

Very tenderly the old woman's wrinkled, toll-worn hand touched the fresh, green leaves, as memories of the sturdy young rascal who had planted the violets stole back to her heart. How proud she had been of John! He was the orphan nephew of her late mistress, who had adopted him, but she had died soon after Kitty's birth, and it was Sarah Cotter who had taken care of everything and worked early and late for "them precious children," for her master, Sebastian Stuart, was an absent, highly irritable man who rarely quitted his study.

When the boy grew up rather wild nurse declared that he was but high-spirited, and whatever his faults he was devoted to Miss Kitty, and that no one could deny. But Kitty was the one creature for whom her father cared, and consequently he looked with a jealous eye on his nephew, and the least word from the lad was sufficient to open the vials of his wrath. Two years previously, when John had come down to spend his birthday as usual, his uncle had suddenly missed a number of bank notes. Jack alone had been in his study; Jack was known to be in chronic difficulties, and there was a terrible scene, ending in the young fellow being ordered out of the house, never to return or see his cousin again.

He went, and the following autumn, when nurse got out her master's winter coat, there were the notes, crumpled up in a pocket, and she remembered he had worn it last the week before Master John had been home. Then contrition, sharp and stern, seized upon Sebastian Stuart, and he advertised diligently, but nothing was heard of Jack, and time rolled on.

"Well, I must go and make my cakes," nurse muttered, sadly turning away. "Miss Kitty will have them, like as he was coming down. Ah, dear! it goes hard to lose them as you have nursed and dressed and tended."

The violet patch seemed a favorite spot that spring afternoon. Kitty came there presently, and turning up her frock went down on the damp soil to search among the leaves for the fragrant little flowers.

"It seems a long time to wait," she confided to the mossy wall as she stood against an old tree arranging her blossoms, the bright sunlight falling on her chestnut head. "But if he is alive he will come back. He never broke a promise to me. There are always violets out for Jack's birthday. I never knew them to fail."

"And we always wore half each and now you are keeping them all," said an eager voice behind her.

She turned to see a tall, bronzed man; she turned to see her boy sweetheart, and the sad days, the lonely months, were all forgotten as the two who had carried the violets from the woods and tended them as children met in that shady corner again.

"He is so sorry, Jack," she said at length, when the tale was told. "You will not be hard on him, will you dear?"

"Hush! Here he comes."

And strangely enough, a third visitor came toward the bed of violets now, a bent, dreamy-eyed old gentleman, who nearly passed them, and then stopped abruptly.

"Jack, my boy, back again!" he cried. "I was a wicked old man, Jack. Can you forgive me?"

Of course he could, producing the torn piece of paper on which was the advertisement. In Havana he had taken it to light his pipe and suddenly caught sight of his own name.

"It has done me good, you know," he said in his deep, frank voice. "Roughing it always does a fellow good, if he puts his back into it. Now, I want a birthday present from you, uncle, one I shall know how to take care of," and he drew Kitty forward.

It was with a curious mist in his eye that Sebastian Stuart put her hand into Jack's broad palm and blessed them. He had made a terrible mistake; he had nearly wrecked two lives. It is not always that things come out right at last, and he was a thankful man that day.

Spring evenings are chilly, and the spotless kitchen, with its cheerful fire and the scent of hot cakes seemed a very pleasant place as the young couple stole up to the back door, much as in the days of yore they had returned from meadow or wood and gone straight to their best friend.

"To think that he should have a-come this very night, my own dear boy!" murmured the old woman, after another errand to the sitting room, where on various pretexts she kept going to look at Master John, to surreptitiously lay a trembling hand on his big shoulder, or the crisp hair that had always been so hard to comb. "Aye, the Lord has heard my prayers; I have got both my children again, and Master John will sleep in his own little room again to-night!"—American Queen.

A Dutch Fisherman's House.

The interior of one of these tiny Katwijk houses is a study in simplicity; the large room is kept for Sundays and for company—incidentally serving as a bedroom for the family. In the walls are sets of doors, like cupboard doors; behind these are box-like compartments in which are built beds. The other room is kitchen and living room. The old Dutch hearth is in the corner; a copper kettle hangs from the crane. The table before the window, with its china coffee service always ready, is a feature of every home. In the cupboard are just enough plates, knives and forks for the family. Cleanliness seems the watchword of every household, for everything glistens from the brick door-steps, where lie the white sabots, to the fascinating brass and copper utensils hanging about. The women's duties are not many, their cares few; having scrubbed the house within and without they linger about street corners gossiping or stand for hours out on the dunes, arms akimbo, looking out to sea. But out in the fields they do labor hard. Up through the gray mist their sturdy figures loom darkly as bending over hoe or stooping to the earth they toil silently, patiently, from dawn till dusk. Wives and daughters of the fishermen spend many of their days mending the huge nets, which, stretched out over the dunes, envelop them in a clinging veil of black. Along the edges sit the women, wooden needle and stout cord in hand, repairing the great gaps and yawning holes, stopping occasionally to drink a cup of hot coffee brought out to them in pots by the children.—Outing.

Making Lemons Sour.

How often does a lemon fail to live up to its sour reputation! Until lately American lemons were more likely to thus fall than foreign ones, the reason of which was that American growers did not know how to cure lemons. The fruit was never tart enough. There would be plenty of juice, but it contained a high percentage of sugar and a small percentage of acid, which made it unmarketable. But a few years ago the lemon growers clubbed together and sent experts over to Italy and Spain to learn the business, and now they are producing much better results. They pick the fruit before it begins to turn yellow, and put it in a curing house, where it is kept at an even temperature of about fifty degrees for about twenty days, which "sweats out" all the sugar. It is then removed to another temperature for sixty days more before it is ready for the market. Thus the highest degree of acid and the largest degree of juice can be obtained. One of the curious effects of this "sweating" process is to reduce the thickness of the skin. It originally grows thick and tough, but the acid seems to eat it up.—Beverages.

Changing the Subject.

An original method of closing a conversation was adopted by a host at a dinner party the other day. A young man had turned it to a topic which he did not care to discuss, and angry glances failed to make any impression. "Now, then," said the host at last, "let's change the conversation. For what we have received," etc.—London Globe.

Composite Maxims.

A penny saved spoils the broth.
A fool and his money corrupt good manners.
A word to the wise is a dangerous thing.
A guilty conscience is the mother of invention.—The Century.



Time Always Gets Its Revenge.

Here's a little truth sublime,
Full of wisdom deep:
No man's ever beaten time
By stealing it from sleep.
—Philadelphia Record.

At His Tailor's.

"It's a magnificent suit, sir."
"Yes; what a pity I don't fit it."—In-
dianapolis News.

Unwelcome Knowledge.

Mother—"What is baby crying about now?"

Bobby—"Cos I took his cake an' showed 'im how to eat it."—Boston Globe.

Woman's Aims.

"Why is a woman such a poor shot?" queried the Simple Mug.
"Give it up," said the Wise Guy.
"Because she aims at Mrs."—Phila-
delphia Record.

And Enjoys It.

"Do you get a rest every summer, Mr. Shadd's?"
"Oh, yes, thank goodness; I'm only in business—I'm not in society."—De-
troit Free Press.

Hands Off.

"What have you got that sign 'Hands Off' posted outside your works for?" asked the curious individual.

"Because," returned the jocular mill owner, "my men are on strike."—Phila-
delphia Record.

A Plausible Defence.

Sunflower—"I'm good for lots of things; you don't work at all, do you?"
Castor-bean Plant—"Don't work? Say, where did you think the furniture factories got all their bureaus, bed and chair rollers?"—Chicago Record-Herald.

Amiability Itself.

"I am afraid that my conversation is uninteresting," said Willie Washington.

"Don't let the thought trouble you," answered Miss Cayenne, sweetly. "I was a little bit sleepy anyhow."—Washington Star.

A Candid Announcement.

"Mike," said Plodding Pete, "de world owes us a living."

"Yes," answered Meandering Mike, "but in order to collect it we've gotter do somethin' to convince de world dat we're alive. An' dat's too much trouble."—Washington Star.

Bad Operation.

Boynton—"Harding tells me he is suffering from an operation."
Sawyer—"I hadn't heard of it. Surgical, of course?"

Boynton—"No, this was a financial operation. Gibbons borrowed \$10 of him yesterday."—Boston Transcript.

The Literary Merry-Go-Round.

Stubbs—"Whenever I write a poem I hustle it off to an editor as soon as possible."

Skitts—"Any special reason?"
Stubbs—"Why, you simpleton, I want to get it back again as soon as possible."—Chicago Record-Herald.

A Timely Warning.

He—"Do you think a man wants to wear bracelets?"

She—"Well, if a man wants to wear bracelets I think he ought to wear them, so that everybody will know he is the kind of man that wants to wear bracelets."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Consideration.

Delighted Client—"I understand you have won damages for me!"

Attorney—"Yes, sir—ten dollars."

Delighted Client—"Good! What are your charges?"

Attorney—"In view of the small damages awarded I will reduce my fee to fifty dollars."—Ohio State Journal.

Candor.

"I suppose," said the effusive lady who was visiting the Meektons, "that your wife is sure that she has the best husband that ever lived?"

"Yes," answered Meekton, with something like a sigh, "but at the same time I don't believe she thinks that is saying much for me."—Washington Star.

Not Worried.

"Can you understand all of Shakespeare's works?" asked one student.

"No," answered the other. "But I don't let it worry me. I don't believe Shakespeare himself could have understood some of the things he wrote after the stage managers and literary commentators got through with them."—Washington Star.

A Great Help.

Wife—"Never mind if you have failed, dear. I have \$1500 saved up from the pin-money that you have given me from time to time."

Husband (joyfully)—"You make me feel easier. What a help!"

Wife—"Help! I should say so. Why, on this money I can keep up my wardrobe for a year to come."—Leslie's Weekly.

BILL ARP'S LETTER

Discusses a Visit of Mrs. Arp to Daughter and Grandchildren.

TALKS IN A HIGHLY PLEASING STRAIN

Reverts to Many Matters that Will Re-
joice His Better Half When
She Returns Home.

My wife went off to the country to spend the day with one of our daughters and her children. We expected her to return that evening, but got a message that she would spend the night and the next day and maybe longer. Thinks I to myself, she wants me to send her word to come home, and I won't. It has been a long time since the runaway. We missed her, but made no sign. Her chair was vacant. Her familiar voice was no longer heard. The pantry keys hung silent on the nail. Nobody called me from the window to stop working in the garden and rest while the sun was so hot. Nobody to say the flour is out or the hominy or the lard or something else, for something is always out at our house. Little grandchildren come to see us and don't stay long "cos granma ain't here." Everything looks like a funeral. Lonesome isent the word for it. There isent any word for the feeling when the maternal ancestor is not cruising around; when we cant hear the rustle of her dress, nor the sound of her voice nor see her stitching away on some infantile garment or reading over again the last letter from the far away boys.

But the girls gave me a hint and said now was a good time to paint the kitchen and surprise her, for she has been talking about those old dirty, dingy, smoky walls ever and anon once or thrice in awhile. So I opened my big heart and little purse and sent for the painter to come early in the morning. He came and did a nice job of it in a day. The kitchen looks like a parlor. The cook woman caught on to the surprise party and scoured the tables and the tinware and then went home and put on a clean, new dress. My wife came home this morning. We gave her a kind welcome, but made no sign. She was glad to get home and indulged in more hilarity than usual. She cruised around looking at familiar things and places. Soon she wandered toward the kitchen and we kept in halting distance and watched her. Suddenly there was a scream of delight as she looked in at the open door. "Well, I do declare. Did I ever." That is all she said just then, for she turned and came hastily to me and kissed me. She took me by surprise, for she quit kissing me years ago. That kiss more than paid for the paint and the painting. These little sweet surprises are the best part of domestic life. They beat wealth and high life and political honors and fame, and are the next thing to religion, for they are founded in love.

"All thoughts, all passions, all delights
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of love
And feed its sacred flame."

These are the songs of birds in the trees—the flowers by the wayside that comfort us in the journey of life. Song birds and flowers! There is nothing in the wide world that gives such emphasis to the love of God for His creatures. We need food and raiment and, of course, the human family would perish without them. But the birds and flowers are extra gifts to minister to our senses, our emotions. How fortunate for us that as we grow older we love them better. When I was a very busy man and had ambition to rise in the world and advance my wife and children I cared little for birds or flowers, but now they are my especial pleasure. Now I understand the meaning of that beautiful verse, "Consider the lilies how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." He who proviaeth food for the ravens and takes notice of every sparrow that falls to the ground will surely take care of us if we trust Him. I believe there are but two kinds of flowers named in the Bible—the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley—and these two stand pre-eminent today for beauty and fragrance. Of late I have been watching the rose-buds as they unfold their leaves and open into beauty. How wonderfully they are folded upon the little cone and every layer is waiting for its time and turn to come forth and breathe the air and take on colors from God's sunlight. No human fingers could re-fold them and make a bud again. The birth of a beautiful rose is a miracle. It passeth comprehension and excites our wonder only. Just so is the feather of a bird. The microscope shows the most wonderful mechanism in its delicately woven fabric—its strength and its gossamer lightness. Then look carefully at the fringe work of the seed pods that shoot up from the dan-

dellon. Human fingers cannot re-fold them in structure. They are exquisite and must come from the hand of God. There is a limit to the perfection of everything that is made by man, but there is none of the work of nature. The finest cambric needle looks like a blunt pointed file under the microscope, but the point of the bee's sting is invisible. I wish the young folks would sometimes stop and think and study nature. It will refine them in thought and feeling and excite a reverence for their Creator. How beautifully the great poets write about flowers. One says, "The noblest flower that blooms something gives thought too deep for tears." "And 'tis my faith that every flower joys the air it breathes." Some flowers seem vain and some are modest. From my window I see the rambler cannas and the proud and lofty lily has strutting to the morning sun not far away are the humble violets half hiding from the light. Temper says, "Any nose can ravage the scent of a flower, but only the pure in heart have a right to." I am an early riser and every bright morning I visit the garden and inspect the flowers to see the night has opened and cut enough for a fresh vase at the breakfast table. The neighbors' chickens annoy me for my garden is their feeding ground and they scratch the barn yard manure from my plants. So on yesterday I set some chicken wire and stretched along the fence. But I forgot to close the gate and they came in, and when got after them they put their heads through the meshes and got fast. I had fun with those chickens and they will not come back any more. The gardens are fine this fall. The second crop of beans and potatoes are a hand. Turnip greens and mustard abound. A few tomatoes are still left and my good neighbor, Yarbrough, the preacher, sends us some of his tomatoes every few days. His Crime Whirlwind is the finest variety I have ever seen. Verily the limes have fallen to us in pleasant places. Day by day uttereth speech and night by night showeth knowledge. Miss Sara will be rescued, I reckon, not because she is a missionary in a barbarous country, but because she is an American woman. The best opinion is that she had no business going there. Our people have got more sense and are not drumming up women for missionaries to uncivilized countries. It is strange what a passion some people have for long distance charity. The statistics show 65,000 arrests in Boston the last fiscal year, and yet Boston sends missionaries to Turkey to preach and teachers for the negroes in the south. Georgia has only white convicts in her penitentiary while Massachusetts, with only a little larger population, has 1,600, and New York state, with three times the population of Georgia, has 3,600 convicts, besides numerous reformatories with several thousand inmates. The truth is, that every state and every large city has enough of the lawless ignorant and the destitute to care for, and it is mistaken charity to look them and hunt for misery afar. But we are getting along fairly well in this blessed land and have much to be thankful for that our northern brethren have not. May the Lord bless and guide the president in our prayer. The south does not expect "Jim to" legalize his party on the protective tariff or any other republican principle. It does expect him to appoint the best men to office, regardless of their politics. And if his party kicks and threatens as the whigs did John Tyler, let him say as Tyler said to Clay and others, "gentleman, you cannot scare me. My back is against the wall and I will veto these bills." Tyler was a noble man and a conscientious statesman, but he was too pure a man to please either party, and, of course, was not nominated for the next president. That may be Roosevelt's fate. We shall see.—Bill Arp, in Atlanta Constitution.

If you have something to sell, the people know it. An advertisement in this paper will do the work.

CROP WILL FALL SHORT.

Agricultural Commissioners Estimate Cotton Yield at 9,500,000 Bales.
The convention of cotton states commissioners of agriculture adjourned sine die at Hot Springs, Ark., Thursday afternoon. A report of the committee on uniform fertilizer guarantees and laws was the feature of the closing day's session. It recommended to the legislatures of the cotton states that a law be passed similar to that now in force in the state of Georgia. The estimate of the commissioners of the cotton crop for 1901 is 9,500,000 bales. This estimate is based on an examination and state reports and the observation of the commissioners. There is about one-half million bales less than the government estimate of per cent of a full crop would be. Commissioner Hill, of Arkansas, estimated the crop of his state at 600,000 bales, as against \$12,000 last year. The association adjourned at 10 o'clock in Nashville, Tenn., last night.